

### This I Believe: Perseverance

Beethoven. Thomas Edison. Vincent Van Gogh. Helen Keller. Have you ever wondered why our parents tell us stories about them? What do they have in common? What is it that they possessed, which enabled them to keep on trying, despite the umpteen times they had to face failure? It is perseverance—sheer hard work, patience and commitment. I feel that it is impossible to succeed in every single thing that we do. These people I mentioned above taught me that to err is human, and that in life, what we should be more afraid of, is not falling, but not being able to stand up again after a fall.

Due to her poor family background, my mother had to give up her ambition of being a lawyer. Now, she often tells me that since she has the capacity to provide me with my needs, I should work hard as a student, so that I would be given more opportunities when I grow older.

However, I was never born intelligent. My classmates could watch television programmes all day long, turn in their work late, and still obtain straight A's. But I was different. I prioritized work before play and handed in my work punctually, but my report book was always stained a sea of red and I often went home crying to my mother. I couldn't understand why life was so unfair; and I couldn't comprehend why I couldn't seem to get good grades no matter how hard I tried.

Once, something my mother said really inspired me. She told me, "If you didn't get what you wanted even if you'd work hard, work harder. And if that still doesn't work, work even harder. If you work hard enough for what you want, good grades or whatever it is will naturally come knocking at your doorstep. Don't cry over spilt milk and don't ever give up." Thinking over what my mother said, I felt that what she had said made a lot of sense and it was plain pointless to ask myself those ridiculous rhetorical questions.

Thus, I told myself I'd work doubly as hard and do whatever it takes to improve. In class, not only did I pay close attention to the teacher, I took down extra notes as well. At home, not only did I do my homework, I also studiously completed assessment books.

My hard work soon paid off. I improved examination after examination—from being the 16<sup>th</sup> in class, to the 8<sup>th</sup> and finally, 2<sup>nd</sup> during the Primary School Leaving Examination.

Since then, I have been carrying the "never say die" and "never give up" attitude towards everything I do. I believe that as long as one perseveres, things will eventually go the way you want it to. This does not only apply academically but in many other meaningful things in life as well. Be it dreams, friends or even yourself, perseverance will conquer any obstacle and roadblock, no matter how catastrophic.

Perseverance, this I believe.